



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221
Telephone: (804) 367-2323 Fax: (804) 367-2391

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM

HISTORIC DISTRICT

An historic district is defined as a significant concentration of buildings, structures, or sites that are united historically and aesthetically by plan or physical development. The following constitutes an application for preliminary consideration of eligibility for the nomination potential of a historic district for listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. This does **not** mean that the district is being nominated to the registers at this time. Rather, it is being evaluated to determine if it qualifies for such listings. Applicants will be notified of the staff's and the State Review Board's recommendations.

Contact the Virginia Department of Historic Resources Archivist to determine if previous survey material for this proposed district is on file, and if the district has been previously evaluated by DHR. Obtaining previously recorded information could save a significant amount of time in preparing this Preliminary Information Form (PIF). The archivist may be reached by phone at (804) 482-6102, or by email at Quatro.Hubbard@dhr.virginia.gov. The archivist will also give you the address of the regional office to which you should send your completed PIF materials.

Please type this form and, if additional space is needed, use 8½" x 11" paper. If an electronic version of this PIF is available, it would be helpful if it could be submitted on a disc, or via email to the archivist. Note: All submitted materials become the property of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and will not be returned.

Photographs: Please provide at least four (4) **color or** black-and-white (B&W) photographs of general streetscapes and four (4) color or B&W photographs showing a sample of individual buildings within the proposed district. The inclusion of photographs is essential to the completion of this application. **Without photographs, the application cannot be evaluated.** Photographs should be labeled on the reverse side in soft pencil or china marker (not with adhesive labels), and are not to be mounted or affixed in any way.

Digital Images: In addition to the images printed on photographic paper, digital images, if available, should be submitted in TIF or JPEG format and can be included on the same disc as the PIF.

Maps: Please include two (2) maps showing the location of the proposed district:

- A copy of a location map with the date, the name of the county/city, the name of the property, and its location on the map labeled with a pencil. Maps can be obtained from websites such as Google or Bing, or using software such as Google Earth. Sections of USGS Quadrangle maps also can be printed free of charge from <http://store.usgs.gov> and hand-labeled to mark property boundaries or location.
- A map showing a closer picture of the proposed boundaries with street names and/or routes and possible building footprints would also be helpful. Please include a "North" arrow, date, and "Not to Scale" on this map.

Before submitting this form, please make sure that you have included the following:

- Labeled location map
- Proposed district boundary map
- 4 labeled color or B&W general photos
- 4 labeled color or B&W individual building photos
- Completed Resource Information Sheet, including
 - Applicant contact information and signature
 - City or county official's contact information

Thank you for taking the time to submit this Preliminary Information Form. Your interest in Virginia's historic resources is helping to provide better stewardship of our cultural past.

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

PIF Resource Information Sheet

This information sheet is designed to provide the Virginia Department of Historic Resources with the necessary data to be able to evaluate the significance of the proposed district for possible listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. This is not a formal nomination, but a necessary step in determining whether or not the district could be considered eligible for listing. Please take the time to fill in as many fields as possible. A greater number of completed fields will result in a more timely and accurate assessment. Staff assistance is available to answer any questions you have in regards to this form.

General Property Information		For Staff Use Only DHR ID #: 128-5191	
District Name(s):	Belmont Historic District		
District or Selected Building Date(s):	1889	<input type="checkbox"/> Circa <input type="checkbox"/> Pre <input type="checkbox"/> Post	Open to the Public? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Main District Streets and/or Routes:	Albemarle, Bullitt, Elm, Jamison, Dale, Highland, Stewart, Tazewell, Kirk, Campbell, and Wise Avenues; 3 rd St. — 11 th St, Southeast		City: Roanoke Zip: 24013
County or Ind. City:	City of Roanoke		USGS Quad(s): Roanoke

Physical Character of General Surroundings	
Acreage: _____	Setting (choose one): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City <input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Town <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Corridor
Site Description Notes/Notable Landscape Features/Streetscapes: City residential neighborhood laid out on a grid pattern with commerce limited to main arteries, situated immediately southeast of downtown Roanoke.	
Ownership Categories:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public-Local <input type="checkbox"/> Public-State <input type="checkbox"/> Public-Federal

General District Information	
What were the historical uses of the resources within the proposed district? Examples include: Dwelling, Store, Barn, etc...	
Residential neighborhood with commercial thoroughfares.	
What are the current uses? (if other than the historical use)	Same
Architectural styles or elements of buildings within the proposed district:	Late Victorian, Early 20 th century residential and commercial styles.
Architects, builders, or original owners of buildings within the proposed district:	Belmont Land Company
Are there any known threats to this district? Transportation expansion; building modification, other.	

General Description of District: (Please describe building patterns, types, features, and the general architectural quality of the proposed district. Include prominent materials and noteworthy building details within the district and a general setting and/or streetscape description.)

The proposed Belmont Historic District consists of the suburban area immediately southeast of downtown Roanoke and is generally bounded by the Norfolk & Western Railroad tracks to the north, Thirteenth Street to the east, Albemarle and Highland avenues to the south, and Interstate 581 to the west. In addition to hundreds of houses constructed between 1890 and 1920, the neighborhood known since its inception as Belmont contains a small number of public resources, commercial buildings, and several churches. The three previously listed individual resources in the district provide examples of each of these three property types: Fire Station No. 6, the R. L. Lawson Warehouse, and Belmont Methodist Church.

The residential architectural styles are generally vernacular with detailing in the porches and gables representative of popular styles from the period. The majority are of frame construction, with the intersecting-gable (gable-ell) or hip-and-gable, as well as the American Foursquare being the predominant forms. The Queen Anne style and the Craftsman Bungalow also represented in parts of the district. Gothic Revival was the style of choice for the churches, which most of which are of brick construction.

The eligible Roanoke Southeast Historic District, a sprawling area encompassing numerous development projects still recognized today as separate neighborhoods, overlaps the proposed Belmont District along the southern border of the Belmont Neighborhood. Belmont was created first of all the planned Southeast Roanoke neighborhoods and its character is therefore distinctive from the others, such as the Riverland (Neighborhood) Historic District (NR 2013), developed more than a decade later, between 1900 and 1930. The house forms in Belmont tend to be slightly larger on average—two full stories or more in height, and much more likely to have been clad with weatherboards than bricks. Traditional I-houses and late-Victorian forms with complex massing, and Folk Victorian decorative motifs are found throughout Belmont. While early Colonial Revival-style American Foursquares are present in Belmont, they are not found in overwhelming numbers on most streets, and rarely found on the streets that developed first – chiefly those located closest to the N&W Shops. Foursquares, especially the Craftsman-style variety, and of course Craftsman Bungalows, are much better represented in the later neighborhoods. Modest Tudor Revival houses like those found in most of Roanoke’s 1920s and 1930s neighborhoods are rarely encountered in Belmont. Indeed, compared to each of the recently listed historic districts in different parts of Roanoke, Wasena (2012), Riverland (2013), and Melrose-Rugby (2013), Belmont is considerably older, much more architecturally diverse (and generally more sophisticated), and at least as equally well preserved.

Significance Statement: Briefly note any significant events, personages, and/or families associated with the proposed district. It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or genealogies to this form. Please list all sources of information. Normally, only information contained on this form is forwarded to the State Review Board.

The Belmont Historic District appears to be eligible under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The period of significance begins in 1888 with the formation of the Belmont Land Company, and ends in 1964 [50 year cut-off].

Belmont is among the oldest and best-preserved neighborhoods in the Roanoke Valley. The Belmont Historic District retains overall integrity of design in terms of form, plan, and spatial organization. These elements alone demonstrate integrity of association (sufficiently intact to convey its historical relationship to events, particularly the industrial development of Roanoke) and feeling (sense of the particular period of time in which the events occurred).

The neighborhood developed on the south side of the mile-long strip of Norfolk and Western Railway East End Shops established in 1882, the same year the City of Roanoke was founded. The Belmont Land Company formed in 1888, and they and other investors capitalized on the influx of railroad workers needing homes. By the turn of the 20th century, residential development had expanded along the rail lines to the north and west, and streetcar lines to the south and east.

As did most of the city, Belmont developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries during a period of tremendous growth and prosperity directly associated with the merger of the Shenandoah Valley and the Norfolk & Western railways and with the merger of the Shenandoah Valley and the Norfolk & Western railways and the construction of the new headquarters in Roanoke. In response to the population boom that resulted from the intense industrial and commercial development of the city, a number of land companies were formed in the 1880s and 1890s to develop the rural land surrounding Roanoke into residential neighborhoods. The area of southeast Roanoke was annexed to the city in 1882, 1890, 1915, 1923, and 1943. Land companies such as the Roanoke Land and Improvement Company (a subsidiary of the Shenandoah Valley Railroad), the Belmont Land Company, the Oak Ridge Land Company, and the Buena Vista Land Company quickly purchased the land on speculation. Located adjacent to the railroad tracks and the Roanoke Machine Shops, the neighborhood developed rapidly to provide housing for the infusion of railroad and other industrial workers. In the early 20th century, the area continued to grow with the construction of a plan by the American Viscose Corporation in 1917 along the Roanoke River at the southern edge of the area.

Despite the volatile nature of real estate investment in the city, the southeast section continued to develop in the late 19th and early 20th century as a working-class neighborhood for the employees of the railroad and other nearby industries. The streets were named for many of the original investors of the Belmont Land Company as well as some of the Norfolk & Western executive, such as the solicitor, William C. Bullitt. In 1905, the streetcar lines extended to southeast, running south on Third Street from downtown then east on Dale Avenue (Barnes, *History of the City of Roanoke*, 1968: 409). This line would later extend farther south along Ninth Street to the American Viscose Plant.

A number of industries and businesses were constructed along the railroad in the early 1900s and provided employment to many of the residents of southeast. City directories and Sanborn Fire Insurance maps indicate the locations of such industries as: the Virginia Brewing Company (12th Street and Wise Avenue, S.E.); the Ice, Coal, & Cold Storage Company (13th Street and Wise Avenue S.E.); the Roanoke Groceries & Storage Co (Dale Avenue & 3rd Street, S.E.) and the Roanoke Elevator & Milling Co. (Norfolk Avenue & 3rd Street S.E.). Several industries were also located near the tracks south of Bullitt, near Albemarle Avenue and 3rd Street S.E., including: the Roanoke Knitting Mills, the Virginia Can Company, the Roanoke Iron & Bridge Works, and the Roanoke Flour & Feed Company. Construction-related industries- such as Roanoke Wood & Novelty Company (Highland & 11th), Catogni Brothers

Lumber Yard (Tazewell & 3rd). The Jacob Harvey Planing Mill (Jamison & 10th), and the Roanoke Planing Mill and Lumber Company (Salem & 3rd)- were also located in the area, due not only to the location of the railroads but also because of the building boom in the area. The close ties between southeast Roanoke and the industries of the city was recognized with the erection of a monument in Woodland Park “Erected 1893 by P.L. Terry, F.J. Kimball, S.W. Jamison and Joseph H. Sands as san Industrial Monument to Mark the Progress of the City of Roanoke, Chartered 1882.” (Barnes 1968: 273). The monument was moved to Elmwood Park in 1982 for the celebration of the city’s centennial. City directories and census records indicate that the majority of residents of southeast worked at these various industries.

Applicant Information (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property)Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☒Ms. ☐ Miss ☐

Jillian Papa

City of Roanoke

215 Church Avenue, S.W.

Roanoke

VA

24011

(Address)

(City)

(State)

(Zip Code)

Jillian.papa@roanokeva.gov

540-853-1522

(Email Address)

(Daytime telephone including area code)

Applicant's Signature:

Date:

Notification

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for the department to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator or City Manager.

Mr. ☒ Mrs. ☐ Dr. ☐Miss ☐ Ms. ☐ Hon. ☐

Christopher Morrill

City Manager

(Name)

(Position)

215 Church Avenue SW

(Locality)

Roanoke

VA

24011

540-853-2333

(City)

(State)

(Zip Code)

(Daytime telephone including area code)

Please use the following space to explain why you are seeking an evaluation of this district.

Seeking formal VLR/NRHP historic district designation to promote recognition and preservation of this important historic neighborhood.

Would you be interested in the State and/or the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits? Yes ☒ No ☐

Would you be interested in the easement program? Yes ☐ No ☒